

critical habitat designation under the Endangered Species Act for some important marbled murrelet habitat in northern California.

I urge the House today to support my amendment, which will be offered as an amendment to strike this provision, section 116, when the bill is considered later today. There is a way to deal with this problem for the company in California that I know Congressman RIGGS is concerned about, and that is to get that company to do a multispecies habitat conservation plan under the Endangered Species Act. That is the proper way to proceed, not with this rider.

#### JUNETEENTH DAY

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend those in my district who today are celebrating Juneteenth Day, marking the freedom of the last known slaves on June 19, 1865, almost 2½ years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation and 65 days after Lincoln had been assassinated. Gen. Gordon Granger entered Galveston, TX, with 1,800 troops, proclaimed Texas under U.S. Federal authority and declared the 250,000 slaves in Texas free.

His remarks to the slaves and slave owners concluded with his reading of the Emancipation Proclamation. Upon hearing the final line of General Granger's reading, the slaves in Galveston immediately began the first Juneteenth celebration in response to their freedom.

A story that has been passed down through the generations says that President Lincoln sent a messenger on a slow-stepping mule from Washington with the news which did not reach these States, deep southern States, until 2½ years later. This shows that some things never change. Historians have attributed the delay to the slow-moving Washington bureaucracy.

Today this holiday is celebrated throughout America, not just in the South. I know that in my district, in addition to celebrations like picnics, parades, and pageants, very much like those going throughout the country, there are 150 community leaders meeting and how their groups work to better people's lives. I rise to congratulate them. We all must work together.

#### THE BUDGET

(Ms. MCKINNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, proudly beating their chests in 1994, the Republicans signed a contract with America which promised to balance the budget. Last week, however, almost every Republican voted for a budget resolution that would increase the deficit by \$40 billion over the next 2 years.

It was only after 3 years of hard work by President Clinton and the Democrats that we succeeded in reducing the Reagan and Bush deficits from \$290 billion a year to \$130 billion. And now, Mr. Speaker, Republican leaders want to take us back to the borrow-and-spend policies which put us in this deficit hole in the first place.

By now it should be crystal clear that the only things the Republican Party cares about are giving tax breaks to the wealthy and more money to the Pentagon.

Mr. Speaker, let's face it. The Contract on America was nothing more than the vehicle by which the Republican Party delivered Government handouts to defense contractors and junk bond dealers, period.

#### REPUBLICAN HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, both Democrats and Republicans support a health care reform bill that would essentially make it easier for people to get health insurance if they lose their jobs or change jobs, or also if they have a preexisting medical condition. The problem, though, is that the Republican leadership continues its effort to add on what I call the poison pill to this health care reform bill, and that is the medical savings accounts. Essentially what they want to do is encourage healthy and wealthier people to opt out of the traditional insurance pool that we have for most health insurance and leave in the insurance pool the people who are sicker, who have less money and, therefore, drive up insurance costs, premium costs.

Last night I heard some of my colleagues on the Republican side talk about how they wanted an MSA demonstration project, but that it is not enough to just have it for employers of 15 employees or less, they want it for 100 employees or less.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is, if you include these MSA's in this health insurance reform, you will destroy health insurance reform. The President will not sign it. The Democrats will not support it. The end result is to increase premiums for the average American.

#### REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that we on the Republican side are committed to making health care more affordable. There is 40 million Americans in this country without health care insurance today. Why? If you listen to them and ask them why, they tell you it is because they cannot afford it.

Now, those on the other side said, well, let us have the Government take over and run our health care system. Let the bureaucrats do it, they can do a better job. Well, the people spoke loud and clear 2 years ago and said they do not want the Government running health care. They want more choice, more freedom, more affordable health care.

Well, we have an agreement between the House and Senate to make health care more affordable, making it easier for small businesses to ban together, pool their employees, get better, more affordable rates. Medical savings accounts provide choice, allowing consumers to be rewarded for making better choices, being able to work with their own physician and save money, which is the bottom line.

Mr. Speaker, we want to bring about real health care reform. We need bipartisan support. We need those who want government-run health care to just say okay, let us let a proposal to make health care reform affordable pass.

#### PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole under the 5-minute rule: Committee on Agriculture; Committee on Banking and Financial Services; Committee on Commerce; Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities; Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; Committee on International Relations; Committee on the Judiciary; Committee on National Security; Committee on Resources; Committee on Science; Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; Committee on Veterans' Affairs; and Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3662, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

Ms. PRYCE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 455 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 455

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the